Report for 2005DC72B: An Economic Impact Analysis of DC Drinking Water Quality

Publications

- There are no reported publications resulting from this project.

Report Follows

An Economic Impact Analysis of DC Drinking Water Quality

Annual Progress Report for FY 2005

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Introduction

In January 2004, District of Columbia residents learned the drinking water supplied by the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) was contaminated with lead (Swartz 2004 and Cohn 2005). The DC government immediately responded by forming the Interagency Task Force on Lead in Drinking Water (The Task Force) to investigate the problem and propose corrective action (Press Release, April 22, 2004). As a short-term solution to the lead leaching problem, The Task Force distributed water filters and test kits to some DC residents (Press Release, April 22, 2004) and informed households by mail and other media how to purify drinking water and water used for sanitation purposes (Williams and Swartz, C., April 22, 2004). Congress responded to the DC lead leaching problem by establishing the Lead-Free Drinking Water Act of 2004 (The ACT). The Act revised regulations regarding the acceptable level of lead in drinking water as well as legally established DC residents' rights to "a safe, lead free supply of drinking water," (Lead-Free Drinking Water Act of 2004). In testimony presented to the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Government Reform, Paul Swartz testified about negative health consequences to DC residents exposed to lead contaminated drinking water (Swartz, P., 2004). This study will assess household and commercial economic impacts implicit in the discussion of DC's drinking water problem.

The following tasks have been initiated towards the completion of the goal to assess the drinking water habits of DC residents.

1. A survey instrument has been designed to collect data on drinking water habits of DC

residents.

2. Four students were hired to administer the survey to DC residents randomly entering recreation and community centers. Students were given an orientation about the purpose of the project and assigned various tasks of a) contacting community centers to obtain authorization and access b) compiling names and addresses of DC churches and area supermarkets. Student employees are working approximately 15-20 hours weekly to complete the data collection process.
3. Student employees are also scheduled to compile survey information into a usable data set and will also conduct preliminary analysis of the data using Statistical Analysis Software (SAS).
4. One student has completed two training sessions to learn how to use SAS.
5. An additional 30 days is needed to conduct the survey, compile the data and generate preliminary results. This task will be conducted in the month of July.
6. An additional 30 days will be devoted to the analysis of results and preparation of a final report.
7. Supplies were ordered to facilitate the data collection process such as the SAS software, a laptop computer, pens, pencils and notebooks.

It's expected that the project will be completed according to the above plan and timetable.